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## HUMAN FACTORS THAT MAKE FOR SUCCESS IN FARMING

A radio talk by Eugene Merritt, Senior Extension Economist, U. S. Department of Agriculture, delivered in the Home Demonstration Radio Program, January 8, 1936, and broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations.

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If you were to interview farmers you would find that success in farming depends as much upon the man as on the land. A successful farmer has a peculiar pride in his team and handles his cattle gently. His pigs come to the fence to have their backs scratched. As you talk with him you realize that he has an innate love for animals and for growing crops; he likes the smell of new-mown hay. Such individuals seem to have something within them that makes them like to farm.

If you watch this farmer still further you will find that he knows how to do the various farm operations with the least expenditure of energy but in such a way that there is an effective result. He can plow a straight furrow, make a well balanced stack of hay, handle farm machinery with the minimum of physical effort. In other words, as a young man he learned how to perform these farm operations. The method has become habit.

Another characteristic that will be evident is that he knows when to plant corn and has his ground in the best condition at planting time. When the hay is ready to harvest, his equipment and work is in such shape that he can devote his full time to it. The job is completed before the hay gets too ripe to make the most efficient feed. In the busy season he is up in the morning and works until dark. He has a time to milk the cows and at that time the cows are milked.

This man has some kind of an urge or drive and a goal towards which he is working that controls all of his plans. When you talk with him you realize that he has a livestock breeding program, a plan for maintaining and building up the fertility of the soil, and a picture of the kind of people he wishes his children to become. He has a certain tenacity or stick-to-it-iveness. He knows what is the right thing to do and goes ahead and does it.

In many cases you would not sense the real reason for this farmer's success unless you chanced to meet his wife. They have a program for the development of the farm and home that is understood by each. The wife realizes the importance of her part and plans her work so that she can make a fair contribution. It may be in providing satisfactory meals for the men during the rush season or taking over certain of the farm operations such as milking the cow. Their garden is planned so as to provide the necessary food for the table, and as to who will do certain garden operations. The farmer realizes that an abundance of berries on the table requires a productive berry patch. You would generally find that the wife knows the sources of the farm income and how much cash was received. She is also acquainted not only with the expenses for the home but for the farm. There is a mutual agreement concerning the use of money. When it comes to the major purchases, whether it is some farm machinery or equipment for the home, or an outside investment, it is based upon their combined judgment.

Such studies as have been made indicate that the net incomes are doubled where there is the most cooperation between the farmer and his wife when compared with families where the cooperation is least.

So I would say that the main human factors that make for success in farming are:

FIRST: - A liking for everything that has to do with farming.

SECOND: - An experience that enables the operator to know how to do the various farm operations with the least expenditure of human energy.

THIRD: - The ability to do the various farm operations at the most appropriate time.

FOURTH: - An ambition based upon a sound program or plan, and the drive or urge to put that plan through.

FIFTH: - A mate who has a like interest in farming and an equal interest on the part of the farm operator in the home.

In the end, the principal personality characteristic that leads to success in farming is good judgment, and then the ability to put that judgment into action. The combined judgment of the farmer and his wife, and the mutual encouragement make success possible.

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